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DE RUEHLP #0373 0682041
ZNY CCCCC ZZH (CCY ADDED PARA AD03CCD8F WSC7716 508)
P 092041Z MAR 09 ZDS
FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0261
INFO RUEHAC/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION 8862
RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA 6237
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 0211
RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES 7421
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 4468
RUEHCP/AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN 0407
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA 4801
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO 6173
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO 7083
RUEHSG/AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO 1851
RUEHUB/USINT HAVANA 1697
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC
RHMFISS/HQ USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC

C O N F I D E N T I A L LA PAZ 000373

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y(MARKINGS)

NOFORN
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/10/2019
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [PHUM](#) [PINR](#) [ENVR](#) [ASEC](#) [PTER](#) [ODIP](#)
BL
SUBJECT: BOLIVIA: MORALES EXPELS EMBASSY OFFICER

REF: LA PAZ 294

Classified By: CDA Krishna Urs for reasons 1.4 (b, d)

11. (C) This is an action request. Please see paragraph 6.

12. (C//NF) Summary: President Evo Morales declared Embassy officer Francisco (Frank) Martinez persona non grata on national television March 9. Morales accused Martinez of "meeting with opposition prefects (governors)" and said he was the "permanent contact with opposition groups during the entire conspiracy period" against the Morales administration. Morales said Martinez was also in contact with Rodrigo Carrasco, who has been implicated by the Bolivian government for his involvement in a major corruption scandal (Reftel). Post's Country Team met to discuss the expulsion and strongly recommends the Department take immediate reciprocal action by expelling a diplomat accredited to the Bolivian Mission in Washington and convoking the Bolivian Charge to express our displeasure. End summary.

13. (C) In a press conference March 9 to announce General Victor Hugo Escobar Guzman as the new commander of the Bolivian National Police (BNP), President Evo Morales said his administration had "discovered the infiltration of external agents who have been in contact with ex-officials of the police, through the Special Operations Command.... Mr. Francisco Martinez, Mexican/North American, was the permanent contact with opposition groups during the entire conspiracy period, was the person from the United States Embassy who was in contact with some ex-police who were working in the Special Operations Command, and today I have decided to declare Frank Martinez persona non grata.... We have information that this man met with opposition prefects during the days in which the Bolivian countryside supported an aggression, a civil coup by the heads of certain groups that still do not believe in democracy...."

14. (C) Morales has in recent days, and in today's remarks, attempted to blame the CIA for the burgeoning corruption scandal within Bolivia's national oil company YPFB.

Government Minister Alfredo Rada has stated that Rodrigo Carrasco, a former elite police officer with the Special Operations Command (COPES) who later became a YPFB marketing manager, was a CIA operative and that COPES was funded by the CIA (Reftel).

¶5. (C) General Escobar Guzman replaces General Miguel Gemio as commander of the BNP. Escobar was the police commander in June 2008, when social groups affiliated with the Morales government (and numbering in the thousands) surrounded the Embassy. Government Minister Rada removed Escobar from command for ordering the police to disperse the crowd in non-violent fashion. Sources tell us the Morales government badly wanted to promote anybody else to the position, but Escobar was at the top of his class and had threatened to go to the press if he was not selected.

¶6. (C//NF) Action Request. In light of President Morales' actions, Post's Country Team met to discuss the expulsion and strongly recommends the Department take immediate reciprocal action by expelling a diplomat accredited to the Bolivian Mission in Washington. Mission also recommends that State Department call in the Bolivian Charge to express U.S. displeasure with this entirely unjustified action. Morales needs to understand his actions will bring a response. End Action Request.
URS